Application for Renewal of a Public Charter School Charter as Authorized by the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002



State of Tennessee Department of Education

Phil Bredesen, Governor

Lana C. Seivers, Commissioner

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Overview of the Statutory Regulations Regarding Public Charter School Renewal

T.C.A. 49-13-121. Term of Charter - Renewal

- (a) New public charter schools, conversion schools and all renewals of charter agreements shall be for five-year periods.
- (b) No later than October 1 of the year prior to the year in which the charter expires, the governing body of a public charter school shall submit a renewal application to the chartering authority. The chartering authority shall rule by resolution, at a regular or special called meeting, on whether to approve or deny the renewal application. The decision of the chartering authority shall be based on the report and evaluation provided for in 49-13-120, If the original charter application was appealable to the state board of education, a decision by the chartering authority to deny renewal may be appealed by the governing body, within ten (10) days of the decision to deny, to the state board of education. If the state board of education directs the LEA to approve the renewal of the charter agreement, the public charter school shall continue to operate for the prescribed period of five (5) academic years. A decision by the state board of education to deny the renewal of a charter agreement shall be final. No appeal may be taken.
- (c) A public charter school renewal application shall contain:
 - (1) A report on the progress of the school in achieving the goals, objectives, pupil performance standards, content standards, and other terms of the approved charter agreement; and
 - (2) A financial statement that discloses the costs of administration, instruction, and other spending categories for the school.

T.C.A. 49-13-122. Revocation or Renewal of Charter

- (a) A public charter school agreement may be revoked or denied renewal by the final chartering authority if such chartering authority determines that the school did any of the following:
 - (1) Committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter;
 - (2) Failed to meet or make adequate yearly progress toward achievement of the state's accountability system; or
 - (3) Failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management.
- (b) If the chartering authority revokes or does not renew a charter agreement, the chartering authority shall state its reasons for the revocation or non-renewal.
- (c) A decision not to renew or to revoke a charter agreement may be appealed to the state board of education within ten (10) days of the decision, except for revocations or failures to renew based on any of the

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violations specified in subsection (d). State board appeals shall be handled on the same basis as provided in T.C.A. 49-13-108.

(d) Except in the case of fraud, misappropriation of funds, flagrant disregard of the charter agreement or the provisions of this chapter, or similar misconduct, or consecutive years of failure to meet student achievement levels, a decision to revoke a charter shall become effective at the close of the academic year.

Tennessee Department of Education Public Charter Schools Contacts:

Eric Hilgendorf, Director of Charter Schools & Choice

Phone: 615-741-8486 E-mail: Eric.Hilgendorf@state.tn.us

Dr. Carol Groppel, Consultant, Charter Schools & Choice

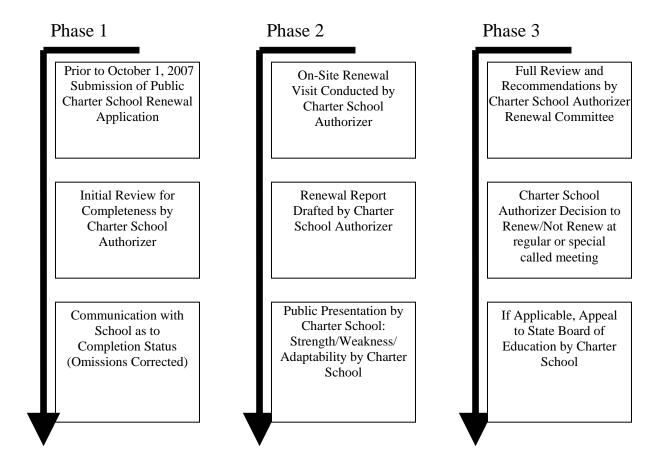
Phone: 615-253-5206 E-mail: Carol.Groppel@state.tn.us

Mailing Address: Tennessee Department of Education 5th Floor – Andrew Johnson Tower 710 James Robertson Parkway

Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0379

Fax #: 615-253-5706

Renewal Application Process: Schematic



Phase 1 - Application

The Application Phase officially begins the public charter school renewal process with the submission of the completed charter school renewal application. The LEA conducts an initial review of the application. This review focuses on the necessary documentation is provided in the application. The LEA completes Phase 1 by communicating with the charter school renewal applicant as to the level of completion. If there are any omissions in the application, the applicant resolves these prior to moving to the next phase.

Phase 2 - Evaluation

The Evaluation Phase commences with a scheduled visit to the charter school by a committee recommended by the LEA. This visit is to provide a "hands on" perspective of the current state of the charter school as a working model that is reflected in their submitted renewal application. This visit will encompass interviews with the school leadership as well as individual collections of classroom teachers, parents and students. Classroom and overall procedural observations will also be conducted. The LEA team will be familiar with the original and renewal application of the charter school and will be able to ask directed questions regarding selected portions of the application or issues needing clarification. The LEA will compile a site-visit report that encompasses their observations and findings from the on-site visitation.

This phase continues with a scheduled public presentation by the charter school applicant to the LEA. This portion of the process design has three broad objectives:

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- 1. To highlight the overall achievements of the school: mission, vision, student achievement, fiscal responsibility, LEA compliance and community/parental involvement.
- To provide relevant accounts of successful educational practices and outcomes that have broader application to the educational system.
- 3. To underscore the individual achievements the school has made through its particular educational methodology, pedagogy and scope.

Phase 3 - Decision

The LEA commences the Decision Phase with a full review of the pertinent three components:

- 1) Renewal application
- 2) Site-visit of the charter school and
- 3) Public presentation by the charter school

On a regularly scheduled or specially called meeting of the Board of Education, the Board will conduct a comprehensive review of the renewal application. This review will be evidenced with a summative written narrative and publicly announced decision to renew or not to renew the charter school application.

If a decision is rendered not to renew the charter school, the LEA will provide written notice of the components within the renewal application that were inconsistent with a positive learning environment. Upon receipt of this notice, the charter school may, if applicable, appeal this decision to the State Board of Education within ten (10) days of the written notice.

Instructions for Public Charter School Application Completion and Submission

Application Completion Guidelines

The following items must be included in the public charter school renewal application in the order listed below and submitted to the local board of education administrative office <u>and</u> the State Department of Education:

- 1. Assurances form signed by the authorized agent of the public charter school sponsor (page 11).
- 2. Completed Charter Renewal Applicant Information Sheet (page 13).
- 3. Narrative addressing the components required in Tenn. Code Ann. §49-13-107 of the *Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002* (page 15).
- 4. Completed Public Charter School Five Year Planning Budget Document with Cover Sheet.
- 5. Any supporting documents such as resumes, curriculum, letters of support, accreditation, etc. These documents should be appropriately labeled as attachments to the application.

Application Format

- 1. The application should be placed in a three-ring binder. The front cover and the spine of the binder should be labeled with the name of the charter school.
- 2. All pages in the application should be sequentially numbered, including appendices.
- 3. Divider tabs and a Table of Contents should be utilized.
- 4. All items placed in the Appendix should be clearly labeled in the table of contents and referenced in the narrative of the application.

Application Submission Guidelines

No later than October 1 (if October 1 falls on a holiday or a weekend, submissions will be the business day preceding the holiday or weekend) of the year preceding the year in which the public charter school plans to renew the charter of operation, the sponsor shall file applications as follows by the close of the business day:

1. Twenty (20) identical hard copies and one electronic copy of the complete application to the director of schools for the local board of education considering the charter school application

AND

2. Two (2) identical hard copies and one electronic copy of the complete application to the Tennessee Commissioner of Education, 6th Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower, 710 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, TN 37243-0375.

The same number of copies of any updates or revisions submitted during the review process should also be submitted to the relevant LEA and the SDE.

Applicants must contact the Local Education Agency to which they are submitting their application to receive any additional local submission requirements.

Suggested Evidence Application Checklist

	Yes	No	Evidence
Student Achievement			
1. The charter school has met AYP:			
A. Year 1			State Report Card
B. Year 2			State Report Card
C. Year 3			State Report Card
D. Year 4			State Report Card
2. The charter school has been flexible in adapting to and addressing			School Improvement
previous year achievement gains and losses			Plan
3. The charter school uses disaggregated assessment data to determine			Data Utilized
academic goals and to modify classroom instruction and curriculum.			
4. The charter school uses previous TN standardized test scores to			TCAR
indicate and remediate individual student weaknesses.			☐ TCAP☐ Gateway
			Galeway
5. The charter school uses previous TN standardized test scores to			ТСАР
indicate and modify areas of program deficiency			Gateway
indicate and mounty areas of program deficiency			Gateway
6. The charter school uses disaggregated data to monitor student			
progress.			☐ Data Utilized
7. The charter school sets annual measurable objectives for continuous			School Improvement
and substantial improvement for each of the applicable subgroups.			Plan
8. Student demographics are used to design programs to meet the unique			School Improvement
needs of each school building's population.			Plan
9. Attendance, drop-out and/or graduation rates are used in the planning			Data Utilized
process to improve school quality.			
10. High school graduate entrance into college			College acceptance/ admissions records
11. Other tools used for student assessment			
11. Other tools used for student assessment			1日
Parental Involvement	Yes	No	Evidence
1. The charter school has a written parent involvement policy developed			☐ Agendas
jointly with parents and agreed on with parents.			Parent contract
			Report Cards
			Letters to parents
2. The written parent involvement policy is distributed to parents in a			Policy distributed in
variety of methods.			Student Handbook
			☐ Website posting
3. The written parent involvement policy establishes the charter school's			Other
expectation for parent involvement and describes how the charter school			
will:			Parent Involvement
A. Involve parents in jointly developing the school plan, and in			Policy
the process of school review and improvement;			
B. Build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental			
involvement;			
		i	Î.

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Parent involvement plans include strategies to include parents in professional development available to staff and parents Other methods of parental involvement.			Parent Involvement Policy Agendas Survey Analysis Sign-in sheets Minutes of meetings
Professional Development	Yes	No	Evidence
1. The professional development component of the charter school ensures that staff training is based on scientifically-based research activities and is being implemented.	103	110	Professional development literature/agenda/ annual report
2. The professional development component of the charter school ensures that staff training is based on needs assessment, will improve student's academic achievement and is being implemented.			Results of instructional facilitator meeting
3. The professional development component of the charter school incorporates strategies and techniques, including technology, that improve classroom instruction to help increase academic learning of all students.			Professional development literature/agenda/ annual report
4. Other methods of professional development.			
Organizational Management	Yes	No	Evidence
The charter school has complied with all reporting required by the LEA/SEA/State Comptroller including: A. Student data B. Teacher licensure C. Parent involvement D. Administrative reports E. Special education F. Annual report G. Annual audit 2. The charter school has a sound fiscal policies system. 3. The charter school maintains a positive revenue stream. 4. Other indicators of organizational management 5. The charter school has provided written notice of all waivers granted by LEA to TDOE			LEA

Assurances of Compliance, T.C.A. 49-13-111 Form

This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the sponsor and submitted with the application. An application will be considered incomplete if it is not accompanied by the Assurances Form signed by an authorized individual.

	ation for a charter for (name of school) to be located at
	ation for a charter for (name of school) to be located at is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further I understand that, if
award	ed a charter, the school:
1.	will operate as a public, nonsectarian, non-religious public school, with control of instruction vested in the governing body of the school under the general supervision of the chartering authority and in compliance with the charter agreement and the charter school act;
2.	will meet the same performance standards and requirements adopted by the state board of education for public schools;
3.	will provide special education services for students as provided in Title 49, Chapter 10;
4.	will follow all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services;
5.	will follow any federal and state court orders in place in the local school district;
6.	will comply with federal and state applicable health and safety standards;
7.	will not be a conversion of any private, parochial, cyber-based, or home-based school;
8.	will not be a cyber-based school;
9.	(if conversion school) will demonstrate that parents of sixty percent of the children enrolled at a public school or sixty percent of the teachers assigned to the school have consented their support to conversion (please provide petitions as attachment);
10	will open to bid all contracts for goods and services in excess of five thousand dollars (\$5,000);

11. will be subject to the provisions of Tenn. Code Ann. §12-4-101 and 12-4-102 with regard to

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conflicts of interest;

- 12. will deem meetings of the governing body as public business and be held in compliance with Title 8, Chapter 44, Part 1;
- 13. will employ individuals to teach who hold a license to teach in a public school in Tennessee or meet the minimum requirements for licensure as defined by the state board of education;
- 14. will follow state audit procedures and audit requirements;
- 15. will not charge tuition, unless the governing body of the charter school approves a transfer from another district to a public charter school in its district pursuant to the provisions of Tenn. Code Ann. §49-6-3003;
- 16. will operate on a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year and will adopt and operate under an annual budget for such fiscal year;
- 17. will prepare a budget in the same format as that required by the state department of education for local education agencies;
- 18. will maintain its accounts and records in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and in conformance with the uniform chart of accounts and accounting requirements prescribed by the comptroller of the treasury;
- 19. will prepare and publish an annual financial report that encompasses all funds and includes the audited financial statements of the charter school;
- 20. will require any member of the governing body, employee, officer or other authorized person who receives funds, has access to funds, or has authority to make expenditures from funds, to give a surety bond in the form prescribed by Tenn. Code Ann. §8-19-101;
- 21. will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage;
- 22. will be non-religious in its programs, admissions policies, governance, employment practices and all other operations, and its curriculum will be completely secular;
- 23. will adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient (LEP), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, that are applicable to it;

24. will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that pertain to the applicant the operation of the charter school;	Ol
25. will adhere to guidance in Public Records Act as prescribed in Tenn. Code Ann. §10-7-503;	
26. will adhere to guidance Tenn. Code Ann. §10-7-504 (a)(4)(A) and Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).	
Name of Authorized Signer (Print or type)	
Title of Authorized Signer	
Signature	
Date	

Charter Renewal Information Sheet

Please type on this form or use a computer to generate the required information.

Name of Public Charter School

School Address		
City, County, <u>and</u> Scho	ool System in which school is	located
Legal Name of Charter	· School sponsor	
•	on	
Address		
	State	Zip

Existing and Proposed Grade Levels & Total Student Enrollment

Existing and Proposed Grade Levels & Potal Student Emonment						
	Previous/Current Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment				
Year One						
Year Two						
Year Three						
Year Four						
Year Five						
	Proposed Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment				
Year One						
Year Two						
Year Three						
Year Four						
Year Five						

Ultimately, once all grade spans have been added, wha school?	t is the proposed grade configuration	of the
Brief description of the proposed school's focus and miss	ion (2-3 sentences):	
Signature of Primary Contact Person	Date	

Application Narrative

Application Components- The following narrative section of the application is inclusive of all charter application components as indicated in Tenn. Code Ann. §49-13-107 "Applications Process" (Section 1-20). and additional section (21-23) that provide further detail regarding your school. In your responses, please address all the specific elements listed under the main headings of each of the sections. If additional information or documents are needed to address a particular section, make specific reference to them in the section, label them the appropriately numbered attachment, and append them to the application. As this application is for the renewal of an existing public charter school, some responses may be similar to the original charter application. However, if there has been a significant change at the school, please detail the change(s) in your response. Restate the complete text of the question for each section prior to your response.

Section 1 – Provide a statement defining the mission and goals of the public charter school.

Explain the mission of your public charter school. Provide a clear and concise statement that defines the purposes and nature of the school. Your mission statement should include one or two sentences that indicate what educational services your school provides, to whom and to what degree.

Explain the need for this particular school in the community it serves and the target student population.

State the goals for the school. Specify in clear and measurable terms what you have accomplished in the past as well as what you hope to accomplish in the areas of (1) academic performance, (2) organizational performance, and (3) other school-specific goals.

Section 2 - Provide the instructional goals and methods for the school, which, at a minimum, include teaching and classroom instruction methods that are used to provide students with the necessary knowledge, proficiency, and skills to reach the goals of the school.

Provide a general description of the teaching and classroom instruction methods that have been used by the school. Provide an instructional plan that includes curricula for each grade and year. If original instructional methods outlined in the original application have been changed, please provide a justification of this as well as to the efficacy of this modification. If additional grades will be added to the school, define what instructional methods will be used and provide a justification for their usage.

Describe the school's curriculum by summarizing the levels of knowledge, proficiency and skill expected to be achieved by students in core subject areas at each grade level. Demonstrate how the school's curriculum meets state content standards. How are the educational needs of ELL and Special Education students are met by the curriculum and instructional program of the charter school? Does the plan comply with all legal requirements?

Section 3 - Describe the plan for evaluating student academic achievement at the public charter school and the procedures for remedial action that will be used by the school when the academic achievement of a student falls below acceptable standards.

Provide a detailed framework of the school's approach to assessment, including any external and internal measures that will be used to establish and monitor student academic and non-academic progress beyond the state testing requirements. Summarize how performance data will be collected, reported, and used to improve instruction. Provide details about your plan for intervention and remediation should students fail to demonstrate adequate yearly progress.

Section 4 - Provide an operating budget based on the projected enrollment for the next five years. Public charter schools are required to operate under an annual budget on a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year. Using your historical finance records, provide a realistic, line-item estimate of the revenues and expenditures for operating the school from renewal approval through the fifth year of operation. You must use the *Public Charter School Five Year Planning Budget Document* form and cover sheet which is provided on the Tennessee Department of Education's Charter Schools webpage.

The Budget Cover Sheet may be found at:

http://www.state.tn.us/education/fedprog/doc/chrtrsch_bgtcvr_5yrplanbgt.xls

The Five Year Planning Budget Document may be found at:

http://www.state.tn.us/education/fedprog/doc/chrtrsch_bgtform_5yrbgt.xls

Section 5 - Describe the method for conducting annual audits of the financial, administrative and program operations of the school.

Immediately after the end of the fiscal year (June 30), charter schools must furnish to the local board of education, the special joint oversight committee on education, the commissioner of education and the Comptroller of the Treasury an annual audit prepared by certified public accountants or by the department of audit. Describe the methods the school will use to complete this audit and to conduct reviews of the school's administrative and program operations. Describe how the school will ensure that these procedures are conducted in a timely manner that ensures accurate and prompt reporting.

Section 6 - Provide a timetable for continuing operations as a public charter school which shall provide for a minimum number of academic instruction days, which shall not be fewer than those required by statute.

From your historical files, collect and provide an operational school calendar that outlines your school year. If that calendar differs from the original, please include a justification of that. Include additional timelines that are necessary to document additional facilities that may be incurred to serve the increasing student body.

Section 7 - Explain the rules and policies for governance and operation of the school.

Describe the key rules and policies that will provide for the governance and operation of the school, including the composition of the governing board, the terms of its members, its officers, and its committees. Explain the decision-making processes the board will use to develop school policies. Detail how the board will exercise financial oversight of the charter school.

Section 8 - Provide the names and addresses of the members of the governing body.

Summarize each board member's relevant experience and qualifications and attach their resumes. Provide contact information, and designate board officers by position. Briefly explain how these members have assisted in the past and will continue to help contribute to your school's mission.

Section 9 - Describe the anticipated student enrollment and the non-discriminatory admission policies.

Provide the number of students you anticipate to enroll for each of the next five years of the school's operations. Detail any planned outreach and recruitment strategies. Describe how the school will proceed if the number of applications exceeds the number of available spaces. Explain how your recruitment plan and admission policies will comply with state and federal law regarding nondiscrimination.

Section 10 - Explain the code of behavior and discipline of the public charter school.

Describe the school's policies regarding student behavior and discipline, including the standards of behavior and the school's approach to encouraging positive behavior. Detail how these policies will create an environment for learning. If available, provide a copy of the student handbook.

Section 11 - Detail the plan for compliance with the applicable health and safety laws and regulations of the federal government and the laws of the state of Tennessee.

Describe how the school plans to adhere to the requirements of the health and safety laws and regulations of the federal and state governments.

Section 12 - Describe the qualifications required of employees of the public charter school.

All teachers in a school must have a current valid Tennessee teaching license, or meet the minimum requirements for licensure as defined by the state board of education. Indicate the number and type of teachers and other school staff to be hired. Describe the qualifications you will require of staff. Detail how these attributes will help support the school's mission and goals. Explain your plans for the professional development and evaluation of staff.

Section 13 - Identify the individuals and entities sponsoring the public charter school, including their names and addresses.

Summarize each individual's and entity's relevant experience and qualifications. Briefly explain how these sponsors have helped and will continue to help contribute to your school's mission.

Section 14 - Describe the procedures governing the deposit and investment of idle funds, purchasing procedures, and comprehensive travel regulations.

Detail the policies and processes regarding the deposit and investment of idle funds. Describe your school's purchasing procedures and identify who will have purchasing authority. (All contracts for goods and services in excess of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) must be bid and approved by the governing body of each public charter school). Provide regulations on travel, including policies regarding student field trips and reimbursement of travel expenses.

Section 15 - Provide a plan for the management and administration of the school.

Detail the management and administration plan for the school. Clearly describe and delineate the roles and responsibilities of the school's leader(s), the governing board, and other key personnel. List all leadership positions and provide related job descriptions. If there have been any additional roles or consolidation of roles, please include and justify.

Section 16 - Provide a copy of the by-laws of the governing body of the charter school.

Section 17 - Include a statement of assurance of liability by the governing body of the charter school.

Section 18 - Detail the types and amounts of insurance coverage to be held either by the charter school or approved by the local board of education, including provisions for assuring that the insurance provider will notify the department of education within 10 days of the cancellation of any insurance it carries on the charter school. Detail the types and amounts of insurance coverage. Provide contact information of the policy providers and an assurance from the providers that they will notify the department of education appropriately of any cancellations in policies.

Section 19 - Describe the plan for transportation for the pupils attending the charter school. Charter schools are not required to provide transportation. Describe how your school has addressed the issue of transportation. If your location has changed since your original application, address how this has affected your student body and what you have done to maintain a continuous student body. Provide a detailed transportation plan including the types of vehicles that are used, their drivers and eligible students.

Section 20 - Provide information regarding financial commitments from equity investors or debt sources for cash or similar liquid assets sufficient to demonstrate that the charter school will have liquid assets sufficiently available to operate the school on an ongoing and sound financial basis. In lieu of cash or similar liquid assets, an applicant may provide a financial bond issued by a company authorized to issue surety bonds in Tennessee.

Section 21 – If your school facility has changed since the original application, provide an accurate and representative description of your current school facility.

Describe the board's five-year plan for facilities management. Include a copy of the layout and footprint of the facility and how it is suited to meet the educational and practical needs of your student body. Include overall sq. footage of property and rationale for choosing this property. Include leasing and/or purchasing arrangements (terms of lease) of the property as well as a detailed description of the organizational status and mission of the owner of the facility property.

Section 22-Provide additional evaluative assessment materials as necessary and detailed within charter application agreement with LEA.

Section 23-Provide documentation to demonstrate that the charter school has provided written notice of all waivers granted by LEA to TDOE.

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Statistical Overview of Current Charter School Period

Requested Data	Year 1 2003-04	Year 2 2004-05	Year 3 2005-06	Year 4 2006-07	Year 5 2007-08
Grades Served					
Total Enrollment (SeptJune)					
% of Students Returning from Previous Year					
% of Students Returning that have been Enrolled since the School's First Year					
# Students with Disabilities					
# Students who are ELL					
# Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch					
# Teachers					
# Teachers Returning From Previous Year					
# Other Professional Staff					
# Paraprofessionals					
School Leader (Name)					
Board Chair (Name)					